

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A vehicle suspension assembly, comprising:
 - a first support member ~~attached~~ attachable to a body of the vehicle;
 - a second support member that moves relative to the first support member;
 - at least one air spring coupled with the first and second support members;
 - a height holding device at least partially within the air spring and supported on one of the first and second support members, the height holding device having a moveable portion that is moveable from a first retracted position where the moveable portion permits relative movement between the first and second support members into a second extended position where the moveable portion maintains a desired spacing between the first and second support members; ~~and~~
 - a biasing member that biases the moveable portion into the first retracted position;
 - a hydraulic ram that moves the moveable portion against the bias of the biasing member, the moveable portion comprising a piston portion of the hydraulic ram;
 - and
 - an inlet port associated with the hydraulic ram that selectively locks the hydraulic ram such that pressure within the hydraulic ram provides the only maintaining force to maintain the moveable portion in the second extended position.

2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim 21, including an actuator that controls the inlet port to thereby control movement of the piston portion.
4. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim 3, wherein the actuator moves the piston portion into the second extended position responsive to an application of the vehicle parking brake.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the moveable portion is moved with a force that is too small to cause an increase in a spacing between the first and second support members.
7. (Original) The assembly of claim 1, including a bead plate within the air spring that is associated with the first support member and a retainer plate that is associated with the second support member and wherein the height holding device is at least partially supported on one of the retainer plate or the bead plate.
8. (Original) The assembly of claim 7, wherein the height holding device is supported on the bead plate.

9. (Original) The assembly of claim 7, including a bumper member supported on an end of the moveable portion that contacts the other of the bead plate or the retainer plate when the moveable portion moves into a position to maintain the desired spacing between the first and second support members.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the biasing member comprises a spring.

12. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim 1, including A vehicle
~~suspension assembly, comprising:~~

~~————— a first support member attached to a body of the vehicle;~~
~~————— a second support member that moves relative to the first support member;~~
~~————— at least one air spring coupled with the first and second support members;~~
~~————— a height holding device at least partially within the air spring and~~
~~supported on one of the support members, the height holding device having a moveable~~
~~portion that is moveable from a first position where the moveable portion permits relative~~
~~movement between the support members into a second position where the moveable~~
~~portion maintains a desired spacing between the support members; and~~

a controller that determines when air pressure from within the air spring will be
evacuated and the controller causes the moveable portion to move into the second
extended position to maintain a current spacing between the first and second support
members before the air spring pressure is evacuated.

13. (Currently Amended) An air spring assembly for use in a vehicle suspension system, comprising:

a bead plate supported on a portion of the suspension system that remains stationary relative to the vehicle body;

a retainer plate supported on a portion of the suspension system that is moveable relative to the stationary portion;

a bellows that extends between the bead plate and the retainer plate, the bellows containing a selected air pressure to provide a desired amount of damping of movement of the moveable suspension portion relative to the stationary portion;

a height holding device at least partially within the bellows and at least partially supported on one of the bead plate or the retainer plate, the height holding device having a moveable portion that is moveable from a first retracted position where there is clearance between the moveable portion and the other of the bead plate or the retainer plate and a second extended position where the moveable portion contacts the other of the bead plate or the retainer plate; and

a biasing member that biases the moveable portion into the first retracted position;

a hydraulic ram that moves the moveable portion against the bias of the biasing member into the second extended position; and

an inlet port associated with the hydraulic ram that selectively locks the hydraulic ram such that pressure within the hydraulic ram provides the only maintaining force to maintain the moveable portion in the second extended position.

14. (Original) The assembly of claim 13, wherein the height holding device is at least partially supported on the bead plate.

15. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim 13, wherein ~~the height holding device comprises a hydraulic ram and~~ the moveable portion comprises a piston portion of the hydraulic ram.

16. (Currently Amended) The assembly of claim 15, including an actuator that controls the inlet port to thereby control movement of the piston portion.

17. (Original) The assembly of claim 16, wherein the actuator is operative to move the piston portion into the second extended position responsive to an application of the vehicle parking brake.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The assembly of claim 13, including a bumper member supported on an end of the moveable portion that contacts the other of the bead plate or the retainer plate when the moveable portion moves into the second extended position.

20-22. (Cancelled)

23. (New) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the height holding device includes a stationary portion that is received within the air spring and the moveable portion is moveable relative to the stationary portion and including at least one seal between the stationary portion and an associated portion of the air spring, the seal preventing air from exiting the air spring.

24. (New) The assembly of claim 23, including a shaft portion of the hydraulic ram outside of the air spring and a second seal at an interface between the shaft portion and an associated portion of the air spring, the second seal preventing air from exiting the air spring.

25. (New) The assembly of claim 23, wherein the stationary portion is welded to the associated portion of the air spring.

26. (New) The assembly of claim 13, wherein the height holding device includes a stationary portion that is received within the air spring and the moveable portion is moveable relative to the stationary portion and including at least one seal between the stationary portion and an associated portion of the air spring, the seal preventing air from exiting the air spring.

27. (New) The assembly of claim 26, including a shaft portion of the hydraulic ram outside of the air spring and a second seal at an interface between the shaft portion and an associated portion of the air spring, the second seal preventing air from exiting the air spring.

28. (New) The assembly of claim 26, wherein the stationary portion is welded to the associated portion of the air spring.